

for the monitor device (monitor device MDm in the case shown in Fig. 2) disposed at the front of the conference participant HM1 among the monitor devices MD2 to MDn.

The camera 16 of each of the monitor devices MD2 to MDn receives incident light (such as an optical image of the conference participant HM1) passing through the half mirror 12 along the two-dot chain line BI in Fig. 66, and converts it to image data. The image data output from the camera 16 is sent to the information transmitting and receiving section TRB1 of the signal processing device SPD1, and then sent to the teleconference devices TCD2 to TCDn through the communication network NT. The image data output from the camera 16, for example, of the monitor device MDm disposed at the front of the conference participant HM1 among the monitor devices MD2 to MDn is also sent to the attention-degree-information generating section JB1 of the signal processing device SPD1 and is used for detecting lines of sight or a face direction when attention-degree information is generated, as described above.

The microphone 11 of each of the monitor devices MD2 to MDn converts sound, such as surrounding sound of the teleconference device TCD1 and what the conference participant HM1 says, to audio data. The audio data output from the microphone 11 is sent to the information transmitting and receiving section TRB1 of the signal

09072384.400501

processing device SPD1, and then, sent to the teleconference device TCD2 to TCDn through the communication network NT.

On the screen 14 of the display section 15 in the monitor device MD2 among the monitor devices MD2 to MDn, an image based on image data (that of the conference participant HM2 and the surroundings) captured by the camera 16 of the monitor device MD1 provided correspondingly to the conference participant HM1 in the teleconference device TCD2 and sent through the communication network NT is displayed. From the speaker 13 of the monitor device MD2, sound based on audio data (that of what the conference participant HM2 says) captured by the microphone 11 of the monitor device MD1 provided correspondingly to the conference participant HM1 in the teleconference device TCD2 and sent through the communication network NT is reproduced. In the same way, on the screen 14 of the display section 15 in the monitor device MD3, an image based on image data captured by the camera 16 of the monitor device MD1 provided correspondingly to the conference participant HM1 in the teleconference device TCD3 and sent through the communication network NT is displayed. From the speaker 13 of the monitor device MD3, sound based on audio data captured by the microphone 11 of the monitor device MD1 provided correspondingly to the conference participant HM1 in the teleconference device TCD3 and sent through the communication network NT is emitted.

09972384-100501

In each of the monitor devices MD2 to MDn in the present embodiment, as shown in Fig. 66, since light emitted from the screen 14 of the display section 15 is reflected by the half mirror 12 in the direction indicated by the one-dot chain line B0 towards the conference participant HM1, a face image and the like of the conference participant HM located at the other side is displayed on the screen 14 of the display section 15 as a mirror image, which is reflected by the half mirror 12 to be in a correct state. In Fig. 67, RV indicates an image (a virtual image of the conference participant HM at the other side) obtained when a mirror image of the conference participant HM located at the other side, displayed on the screen 14 of the display section 15 is reflected by the half mirror 12.

When a mirror image of the conference participant at the other side is displayed on the screen 14 of the display section 15 in a monitor device MD in the present embodiment, the positions of the eyes in the virtual image, which are optically conjugate with those of the eyes in the mirror image are displayed so as to almost match the principal point of the lens of the camera 16 through the half mirror 12. Therefore, the lines of sight of the conference